

Bill would foster job creation, opportunity and revenue for Virginia

WASHINGTON, DC – The House Natural Resources Committee today moved legislation supported by Congressman Rob Wittman (VA-1) that would lift prohibitions on energy exploration off of Virginia's coast. The Committee voted to pass H.R. 2231, the Offshore Energy and Jobs Act. This bill would open new areas to offshore energy production, including areas off the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts, by requiring the Obama Administration to implement a new offshore lease plan that includes areas containing the greatest amount of oil and natural gas resources. President Obama's current lease plan keeps 85 percent of U.S. offshore areas closed to energy production. This bill would also establish fair, equitable revenue-sharing for all coastal states and implement reforms to reorganize and strengthen the Interior Department's offshore agencies.

"I believe we can develop our fossil fuels in a smart way and protect marine resources," Wittman said. "This isn't just about energy independence, it's about jobs and our economy, both nationally and locally. Folks across Virginia are in favor of energy exploration off Virginia's coast. I am pleased the Committee has recognized this and moved this important legislation to give Virginia the flexibility to utilize our resources and put people to work."

Wittman has long been an advocate for American energy exploration in Virginia, supporting multiple pieces of congressional legislation to open up domestic resources. He is also an advocate for renewable energy, including offshore wind, supporting an all-of-the-above energy policy.